



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/500,465	07/13/2004	Masao Kino	26C-038-TN	8135

23400 7590 01/25/2007  
POSZ LAW GROUP, PLC  
12040 SOUTH LAKES DRIVE  
SUITE 101  
RESTON, VA 20191

EXAMINER
----------

AMORES, KAREN J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3616

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	01/25/2007	PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/500,465

Applicant(s)

KINO ET AL.

Examiner

Karen J. Amores

Art Unit

3616

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07/13/2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 3-5, 7-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2 and 6 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 13 July 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>7/13/2004, 11/01/2005</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1, 4, 7/4, 9, and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Tanase et al. U.S. 2001/0006287 (Tanase). Tanase discloses a head-protecting airbag device for a vehicle comprising an airbag folded and housed in the upper edge of windows inside a vehicle, and deployable downward along the windows when fed with inflation gas, wherein:

the airbag includes:

a gas admissive portion (11), which is inflatable with inflation gas by separating a vehicle's inner wall and an outer wall of the airbag; a non-admissive portion (18), which is formed by joining the vehicle's inner wall and outer wall and admits no inflation gas;

the gas admissive portion includes:

a gas feed passage (13) extending along the upper edge of the airbag as flatly expanded for feeding inflation gas along front-rear direction; and

a plurality of vertical chambers (12) juxtaposed along the front-rear direction of the vehicle, each of the vertical chambers being provided at the upper end with a communication port for communicating with the gas feed passage; and

a gas flow regulating means (21) located in at least one of the vertical chambers, whereby when inflation gas flows into the vertical chamber via communication port, the inflation gas is directly obliquely down and toward the vehicle's exterior. The examiner interprets the broad definition for a gas flow regulating means to be the geometry and structure of the airbag.

3. Tanase further the gas admissive portion includes an auxiliary chamber (51) located above the gas feed passage for inflating between a panel as part of the vehicle body and an airbag cover (8) in the vicinity of the housing position of the airbag, the airbag cover being able to open toward the vehicle's interior, and the auxiliary chamber constitutes gas-flow regulating means; wherein the airbag includes a mounting portion (20) for attachment to the panel of the vehicle body, the mounting portion located below the upper end of the auxiliary chamber and above the vertical chamber when the airbag is completely inflated; the gas admissive portion includes a joining inflatable portion (area above 12) located between the gas feed passage and the vertical chambers for, upon airbag deployment, inflating between a panel as part of the vehicle body and an airbag cover in the vicinity of the housing position of the airbag, the airbag cover covering an airbag side toward the vehicle's interior, and the joining inflatable portion constitutes the gas flow regulating means.

4. In reference to claim 11, Tanase further discloses a part of the airbag cover covering an airbag side toward the vehicle's interior in the vicinity of the housing position of the airbag such that the part is suppressed from opening toward the vehicle's interior; whereby at least one of the

Art Unit: 3616

vertical chambers deploys while being pressed toward the vehicle's exterior, and a part of the airbag cover suppressed from opening constitutes the gas flow regulating means.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanase in view of Wallner et al. U.S. 6,176,515 (Wallner). Tanase discloses the head-protecting airbag device as described above, but does not disclose a flexible belt. Wallner teaches a flexible belt (82) in an exterior side being joined to the vicinity of at least one vertical chamber and to a vehicle body in the vicinity of a housing position of the airbag (fig. 1), whereby the vertical chamber, when inflated, is pressed toward the window, and the belt constitutes the gas flow regulating means. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tanase such that it comprised the flexible bent as taught by Nishikaji so as to resist movement of the inflatable curtain and help maintain its position (column 4, line 11).

7. Claims 5, 7/5, 8, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanase in view of Niederman et al. US 6,338,498 (Niederman). Tanase discloses the head-protecting airbag device as described above, further disclosing the airbag including a secondary chamber (14) inflatable below the gas feed passage, the secondary chamber not being communicated with the gas feed passage at the upper end, the secondary chamber is

Art Unit: 3616

communicated with the lower part of at least one of the front vertical chambers (14a), whereby inflation gas flows into the secondary chamber.

8. Tanase does not disclose the auxiliary chamber located in plurality above predetermined number of vertical chambers. Niederman teaches the auxiliary chamber located in plurality (areas between 70), respectively above two of the vertical chambers (areas between 56). It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tanase such that it comprised a plurality of auxiliary chambers in view of the teachings of Niederman so as to cushion a larger area between the passenger and the roof rail during a collision event (column 1, line 45).

9. Niederman further teaches a holder (60) located proximate to the housing position of the airbag for holding and fixing the periphery of the communication port of at least one of the vertical chambers upon airbag deployment, and the holder constitutes the gas flow regulating means. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Tanase such that it comprised the holder in view of the teachings of Niederman so as to attach the curtain airbag in a hinge-like fashion, creating the shape of the cushion barrier to be protected at that region (column 5, line 25).

***Allowable Subject Matter***

10. Claims 2, 6, and 7/6 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Conclusion***

References considered pertinent to Applicant's disclosure are listed on form PTO-892. All references listed on form PTO-892 are cited in their entirety.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Karen J. Amores whose telephone number is (571)-272-6212. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on (571)-272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Karen J. Amores  
Examiner  
AU 3616

KJA  
19 January 2007

  
PAUL N. DICKSON  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600